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Rossini is preaching the same doctrine. You will remember how the critics treated him a generation ago. Yet the "inventive faculty," that comes direct from heaven, has never been so largely bestowed on any composer since Mozart. I speak advisedly when I say that of melodies of the higher degree of popularity in England, more are traceable to the pen of this than to that of any other musician who has ever lived. You will, doubtless, sneer me down; but, confident that I have truth at my back, I fearlessly assert that it is the gift of melody, which, to our leading musicians, is the lost element of their art.

August 28, 1868.

Yours very truly,

GEORGE TOLHURST.

[We have allowed Mr. Tolhurst to plead his own cause in his own fashion; and if our readers think that he has done so successfully, we are glad to have been of service to him. That other critics have copied our tone, and in many instances our words, is not at all unlikely—they have paid us that compliment on some former occasions—but we cannot understand why Mr. Tolhurst should blame us for reviewing his Oratorio as soon as it was sent to us; nor can we conceive the possibility of his supposing that we should reverse our judgment upon a work because "some hundreds" of people sat for three hours with "wrapt attention" to listen to it; especially as he afterwards endeavours to prove that applause and encores are not to be accepted as conclusive evidence of the worth of the composition performed. We can scarcely believe that any author will agree with the truth of a review unless that review be favourable; but we counsel Mr. Tolhurst to dismiss from his mind any lingering notion of his work being beyond the comprehension of his critics. If we are all "in the dark" respecting *melodic outline* and Rhythm, we fear that "Ruth" will not prove the light to guide us to the truth.—Ed. *Musical Times*.]

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—Mr. Taylor's "Few Words on the Anglican Chant," have received a favourable criticism from very competent judges, and yet I think there are several assertions admitting of discussion; for some of which I would beg a short space in your musical paper.

The important point for argument is that on which the Rev. Dr. Dykes, and the Rev. Morton Shaw differ, as appears in the Preface to the paper. Dr. Dykes supports the Author's principles of pointing, by saying, that "In singing we do not utter several syllables to one note," while Mr. Shaw considers that the rule "excludes too absolutely the assigning of two syllables to a note, which in some instances is needful, in order to avoid a worse evil." Now, I think, Dr. Dykes will discover the error of his assertion if he will just sing through the first eight notes of the soprano part of the Anthem, "Lord, for thy tender mercies' sake;" or the air of the National Anthem; or the song "Rule, Britannia!" There are instances in each, and in almost every melody, of several syllables to one, or the same note; for surely the repetition of a note cannot be considered melody.

Then, the author, "after fully weighing" Mr. Shaw's objection "is still unable to admit the existence of any 'worse evil.'" If he will turn to his own example—and he only gives one, whereas, to establish his principles he should have illustrated them by at least a dozen verses from some one psalm—if he turn to his example, he will find the "worse evil" prominently displayed. The melody of a chant contains, by his own showing, five bars, and, in consequence, five accented notes. Of the syllables which he has assigned to these five accented notes, three ought not to be accented at all: they are the last syllable of the word *salvation*, the word *of*, and the second syllable of *heaven*. How can the word *salvation* reasonably have three accents, and the word *heaven* two, as Mr. Taylor sees fit to give them?

Again, he marks emphatic words by italics, and emphatic syllables by acute accents, thus—"the *sight of the heathen*"—putting four accents on four successive syllables. This is unnatural and practically impossible, notwithstanding the writer's elegant assertion that "all the emphatic words are placed in positions suitable to the correct expressions of their natural emphasis."

Having already occupied much space, I pass over several objections, and conclude by dissenting from the spirit of this sentence, which, I confess, took me a long time to understand:—"In this element [the clearly marked melody and metrical order of the chant] the tone language is employed to express the ever-varying sentiment of the words to which the chant is applied." I contend that the sentiment of the words is to be expressed as much in the recitative as in the melodic portion of the chant; and more especially so when so large a share of the words is, according to Mr. Taylor's principle, assigned to the recitation.

Yours truly,

A. S. MARK'S MAN.

CHURCH SERVICES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—I read with great interest your reviews upon the music which has been lately set by various composers to the *Te Deum*, and published in Novello's Parish Choir Book; and also the very able and interesting letter by a Choirmaster, in the same number. Taking the observations in the latter first, I perfectly agree with him, that there are very few settings of the Canticles which, by their variety and tunefulness, and simplicity for congregational worship, recommend themselves to the musician, and are free from the common-place trivialities which have hitherto characterized most of our so-called services. The greater part of the Modern Services I have seen—some of which I have had sung in my own Church—are utterly deficient in those points of tune and real musical, as well as religious feeling, which seem to me to characterize those services which really *are* good and commendable. I quite agree with him in his opinion of the two services he has specified,—Macfarren in A, and Spark in D;—the latter is so well constructed, and at the same time so melodious, that it is to be regretted we have not in the services under review, one of Dr. Spark's setting of the *Te Deum*.

But Choirmaster and yourself, Sir, both seem to have omitted from your list a setting of the Canticles, which, in my humble opinion, far exceeds anything that has hitherto been accomplished of its kind—I mean Mr. Henry Smart's Service in F. That is, indeed, a sublime setting of the Canticles to music, and though it occasionally runs rather high for treble voices, is so satisfactory in every other respect, that it is to be hoped other composers will follow in the same wake.

The number of settings we have had lately are by no means equal in merit; some are remarkably dull and ineffective, and have not a soul-stirring strain in them from beginning to end. There is room enough in this portion of our Church Music for some grand things to be done by the *best living* composers. It is a pity that men of inferior talent should waste so much time upon that which is of so little avail. Your efforts, Sir, are to be commended; and I trust that you will continue to advance the cause of Church Music, by your able criticisms in the *Musical Times*, and by your publication of such excellent music, and to which Choirmaster has so ably drawn your attention.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER.

Manchester, Sept. 12, 1868.